

### Program Overview:

The key objective of the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant program is saving lives and protecting property from fires in unprotected or inadequately protected rural areas. Each Fiscal Year the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service awards the Illinois Department of Natural Resources federal funds for the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program. These funds will be distributed to fire fighting agencies as a 50-50 reimbursement type grant with a maximum award of \$15,000 to a fire agency. The fire agency must spend \$30,000 in order to qualify for the maximum award of \$15,000. This money is a part of a national allotment for rural fire protection under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended by the Forest Stewardship Act of 1990. This program is in accordance with the National Fire Plan. Payments pursuant to this grant are subject to the appropriation of adequate funds by the United States Congress. VFA grants are competitive, so established scoring guidelines will be utilized to evaluate all grant applications.

### Eligibility for the VFA Grant Program:

- Only Fire Agencies defined as Fire Department, Fire District, or Fire Protection District
- Total population of the community protected must be under 10,000 people
- Must have a current Memorandum of Understanding with IDNR
- Local funds must be available at the time of application
- Further details may be found in the current grant application packet

### Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program 2014 Application Package:

- Instructions
- Application form

### Items eligible for the VFA Grant Program include:

- Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
- Protective clothing
- Training and necessary equipment
- Installation of Dry Hydrants to improve water supplies for fire suppression
- Communication equipment
- New motorized vehicle, such as ATV
- Used fire truck or other used motorized vehicles

- Skid or slide in units
- Conversion of Federal Excess Personal Property vehicles to water tenders and engines
- Implementation of Class A foam technology to improve the fire suppression effectiveness of water

Items NOT eligible for the VFA Grant Program include:

- New fire trucks
- Construction expenses for fire stations or training facilities
- Emergency medical equipment
- Rescue equipment

Special Consideration (not in priority order)

- For initial conversion of federal excess trucks into support or attack vehicle
- Fire agencies protecting groups with special legal considerations
- Improved fire protection to public lands and their facilities
- Improved fire protection wildland/urban interface areas
- Improved fire protection in the geographical areas of greatest need
- For agencies who have suffered a loss of over 50% of the asset value (not including real estate values) of their Fire agency's equipment which was not covered by insurance
- Purchase and installation of acceptable communications equipment
- Purchase and installation of dry hydrants
- Fire agencies with multiple mutual aid agreements

For further information please contact:

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Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program

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